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SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1968

Medical Officer of Health: NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Chief Public Health Inspector: F. E. RAEBURN, M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

May, 1969.

To The Chairman and Members,
Sherborne Urban District Council.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1968.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Officers Regulations, 1959.

Allowing for the smallness of numbers under consideration, in general the vital statistics compare favourably with those for the country as a whole.

There was no serious increased incidence of notifiable disease.

I am indebted to Mr. Raeburn, your Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year, and for his assistance in preparing this report. I am also indebted to Mrs. V. Donovan for her efficient services as my Clerk during the year.

I would also like to thank you, Madame, and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health

SHERBORNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1 9 6 8.

Area - 1,650 acres
Rateable Value - 1st April, 1968 .. .. £2,~~9892~~ 2148
Production of a penny rate - 1968/1969 1,120

VITAL STATISTICS

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) 8,020
Natural Growth of Population (Births over deaths) 31

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female		COMPARATIVE RATES Sherborne U.D.	England. & WALEs.
Total	59	55	Rate per 1,000 resident population = 12.1	17.2	16.9
Illegitimate	4	3			

STILL BIRTHS

Total	2	nil	Rate per 1,000 live & Still-births = 20.0	20.0	14.0
Legitimate	2	nil			

DEATHS

Total	45	38	Rate per 1,000 resident population = 10.3	9.1	11.9

DEATHS IN INFANTS

Under 1 year	nil	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = nil	nil	18.0
Under 4 weeks	nil			
Under 1 week	nil			
Perinatal mortality = 20			20.0	25.0

	1968	1967	1966	1965
Deaths from Maternal Causes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Deaths from Tuberculosis	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Deaths from Cancer of the lungs	2	3	2	Nil
Deaths from Other Cancer	10	16	13	19
Deaths from Coronary Disease (Angina)	18	12	12	19
Deaths from Other Heart or Vascular Diseases	22	29	28	22
Deaths from Influenza	2	nil	1	nil
Deaths from Pneumonia	3	nil	7	5
Deaths from Motor vehicle accidents	1	nil	nil	nil
Deaths from All other accidents	nil	nil	1	1
Deaths from Suicide	nil	nil	nil	nil
Deaths from Leukaemia and Aleukaemia	1	nil	nil	1

B. NATURE OF THE DISTRICT

Sherborne is a trading centre of an agricultural area, as well as being a tourist and educational centre. Principal industries include light engineering, manufacture of industrial glass fabrics, glove making, dairies and mineral water manufacturing.

The increase during recent years in private house development suggests that the town provides pleasant 'dormitory' facilities for many employed in Yeovil.

C. HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT which are not the responsibility of the District Council

THE HOSPITAL SERVICE

The Yeatman Hospital (West Dorset Hospital Group of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board) provides the local hospital requirements, both in-patient and out-patient.

LABORATORY SERVICES

The Public Health Laboratory Service has again proved co-operative and efficient.

GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER, OPTHALMIC AND PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the County Council.

They comprise the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, prophylactic inoculation, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, the care and after care of the tuberular, blind and handicapped, health education, the domestic help service and the welfare of the aged.

VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Acknowledgement must be made to the excellent voluntary work carried out in the district by the British Red Cross Society, the Guild of Social Service and the Meals on Wheels service provided by the W.R.V.S.

Fifty four elderly people benefitted from this valuable service compared with fifty one during the preceding year. Not only are the meals appreciated but, even more, (one sometimes thinks) are the twice weekly visits by the helpers who take the meals round.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH - Noel F. Pearson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Part-time)

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset Area, and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is slightly more than one half day per week.

Dr. G. B. Hopkins of the Blandford and Wimborne districts acts in a voluntary capacity as his deputy during his absence on a reciprocal basis.

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR - F. E. Raeburn, M.A.P.H.I.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR - E. Wood, M.A.P.H.I.

Clerical Staff - One Clerk (part time).

WATER SUPPLY

The Wessex Water Board is responsible for the public water supplies in the district.

All the houses in the town have a piped mains water supply and no house is dependent upon a stand-pipe supply.

During the year a few complaints were received regarding discolouration of the water due to iron. More regular flushing of service pipes remedied this nuisance. The supplies remained adequate in quantity during the year.

In addition to the thirty six samples for bacteriological examination taken by the Board, one hundred and sixteen samples were submitted for examination by your public health staff.

Tests of the supplies in the town for plumbo-solvency proved negative.

Five private water supplies were in use for industrial purposes. Regular sampling of these supplies was carried out.

DRAINAGE AND SANITATION

Owing to unsatisfactory results being obtained from the final effluent from the sewage works, the Consulting Engineers received instructions to investigate the sewerage system of the town and to report thereon, with particular reference as to what additional treatment would be required at the existing sewage disposal works, in order to bring the final effluent from the works to an increased standard of purity prior to its discharge to the River Yeo.

The report was received by the Council towards the end of the year and was to receive consideration early during the current year.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

There are four sets of public conveniences in the district supplied with wash-hand basins and a cold water supply. Paper towels and soap are available from a slot machine.

The new conveniences in the Market Yard has both hot and cold water and hot air hand drying facilities.

It is to be regretted that, once again, it has to be reported that vandalism has occurred to an increased extent to this provision made for the convenience of the public.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

House Refuse

The Council's scheme provides for the collection of house refuse weekly and disposal by controlled tipping.

Improved control of the existing tip, commenced in 1967, continued during the year in respect of which no complaints came to my notice. Planning consent was given to the Council's proposal to open a new tipping site at Honeycombe. This site will open when the present site at Blackberry Lane is filled to capacity.

Salvage

There is no salvage collection.

Cesspool Emptying

No provision is required to be made in the district.

OFFICES, SHOP & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

Your two Public Health Inspectors are appointed Inspectors (part time) under the Act.

During the year one hundred and forty eight inspections were carried out, compared with twelve in the preceding year.

All the premises (119) subject to registration in the district are registered.

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

Seventy nine observations were carried out and various spot checks made.

One written notice was served regarding the burning of plastic bobbins which, on several occasions, caused nuisances over the town and the firm concerned took action to stop this.

Eight verbal notices were given for minor infringements.

RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ACT

One factory in the district is registered under the Act.

FACTORIES ACT, 1961 (nil figures not given)

	No. of premises on Register	Inspections	Written Notices
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	2	2	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	51	57	-
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	-	-	-
Total:	53	59	-

Defects	Found	Remedied	Referred by H.M. Inspector
Unsuitable or defective Sanitary Convenience	3	3	-
Total:	3	3	-

No. of Outworkers (Wearing Apparel) - 56

SWIMMING BATHS

There are two private swimming baths to which the public have access. Regular samples of the water from these and other private swimming baths in the district were taken during the year and advice given regarding treatment when necessary.

THE CONTROL OF MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

There are two licensed caravan sites in the district, one of which has not yet been developed.

The remaining one is at Lower Clatcombe for sixty six caravans. The large majority are for residential purposes with a limited number of spaces being reserved for caravans in transit.

Thirty three inspections of the site were carried out during the year.

The residential caravans on this site undoubtedly serve a useful purpose. Nevertheless, difficulties do arise when young children come along due to lack of safe space within the caravan for crawling infants and the dampness, due to condensation, which it is so difficult to overcome by reason of the caravans' construction and lay out.

A number of young couples, no doubt very happy to start their married life under such conditions, find themselves compelled to apply for Council house accommodation when their young family comes along.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

Advice was given in respect of several cockroach and cluster fly infestations.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The duties of the District Council under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, are carried out in the district by the North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee whose activities cover the five districts in North Dorset and the Beaminster Rural District.

Towards the end of the year, the supervision of rodent control by the Joint Committee was undertaken by your Health Department.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

There are no premises subject to registration under the above-mentioned Act within the district.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

No. of licensed premises 1

No. of inspections made 3

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT, 1963

There are no premises registered under this Act in the district.

Under the Act, with certain limited exceptions, any person who carries on a business of providing accommodation for other people's animals, even in a private house, must be registered under this Act by the District Council.

SANITATION OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL CANTEENS

All school canteens and boarding school houses were re-inspected during the year. Thirty four inspections of school kitchens were carried out. The general standard of food hygiene was good.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 and 1951 - Section 47.

No action was called for or taken during the year toward the compulsory removal of a person requiring care and attention.

Persons of this category are not unknown. One is, however, most reluctant to initiate action under this Act unless the welfare of other persons is seriously interfered with. It is rarely in the true interests of the persons themselves, when compulsory removal is so often followed by early demise, which cannot be disassociated from the compulsory removal.

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT

Noise nuisance from a large factory was again experienced during the year. It is hoped that additional works will be carried out in a further attempt to remedy the nuisance.

HOUSING

No. of houses in the district 2,529

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year

No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year ..	62
No. of inspections made	163
No. of informal notices served	Nil
No. of informal notices complied with	Nil
No. of statutory notices served	Nil
No. of statutory notices complied with	Nil

No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1958 .. Nil

Action taken by the Local Authority in respect of such houses:

Demolition Orders made .. .. Nil

Undertaking accepted for:

Closure	Nil
Reconditioning	Nil
Other Action	Nil

No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year .. Nil

The Compulsory Improvement of Dwelling Houses

No action was taken by the Authority under Section 13 of the Housing Act, 1964, to obtain the compulsory improvement of dwellings, in view of the considerable amount of 'improvement' which is being voluntarily carried out by the owners concerned.

Overcrowding

No case of statutory overcrowding was found during the year.

Houses Let in Lodgings

Five houses are known to be let in lodgings.

Improvement Grants

Two applications for 'Discretionary' and twenty four applications for 'Standard' improvement grants were received during the year, compared with one and forty three respectively during the preceding year.

New Houses

Forty eight new houses were built by private enterprise during the year and forty five by the Council compared with thirty six and seventy one respectively during the previous year.

The seventy one new dwellings provided by the Local Authority during the year included fifty dwellings for old people on the Half Acre site, by which provision the Council has fully met the need for this type of accommodation in the town, in respect of which it is to be congratulated.

Forty eight families were housed by the Council during the year, compared with ninety two during the preceding year, but it must be recalled that a large proportion of persons housed during the preceding year were elderly persons into the Half Acre site.

Waiting List

One hundred and seventy two applicants were on the Council's housing waiting list at the end of the year compared with one hundred and eighteen a year previously.

From the above figures it would appear that there is no end to the demand for Council houses which your Council has continually supplied and intends to supply during the current year as far as Government policy will allow.

My own experience is that fewer applicants now come from 'bad' or 'unfit' properties but rather from applicants having taken up employment in the district or from young married applicants who desire accommodation of their own, rather than sharing with 'in laws' under, too often, somewhat uncomfortable conditions both physical and mental.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

1. Milk

Milk and Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959.

No. of 'Dairies' in the district subject to registration 2
No. of 'Distributors' subject to registration 1

Samples

Forty five samples of milk in the district were taken during the year by your Public Health Inspectors and submitted for examination. All samples passed the test.

In addition, two hundred and twelve samples were taken by Officers of the County Council.

Brucellosis

No samples of milk were submitted for examination for Brucella infection by your Inspectors. This examination is carried out as a routine measure by the County Staff, and any positive result notified to me. No such notifications were received during the year.

This sampling is now concentrated on herds where the milk is not subjected to heat treatment but sold untreated. This will explain why no positive results would be found or reported from milk in your district.

Milk and Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959. Regulation 20

No action was called for or taken during the year.

2. OTHER FOOD PREMISES

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business, subject to the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960:

Trade	No. of Premises	No. of Premises fitted to comply with Reg. 16.	No. of Premises to which Reg. 19 applies	No. of Premises fitted to comply with Reg. 19.
Hotels	10	10	10	10
Cafes	7	7	7	7
Public Houses	10	10	10	10
Clubs	4	4	4	4
Church Halls	5	2	5	5
Canteens-Schools	10	10	10	10
Confectioners	3	3	3	3
Meat and fish	7	7	7	7
Grocers	6	6	6	6
Mixed Stores	12	11	12	12
Boarding Schools	21	21	21	21
Food Factories	1	1	1	1
Residential Institutions	4	4	4	4
Greengrocers	6	6	6	6
Stalls	5	5	1	1
Others	3	3	3	3
	114	110	110	110

No. of food premises subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act,1955, in respect of:

Ice Cream	38
Sausages and prepared meats	2
Fish and Chips	1

No. of samples of ice cream submitted for Methylene Blue Test - 105

One hundred and nine of the before-mentioned 'food premises' were inspected during the year, six hundred and fifty nine inspections being carried out.

Food Inspection

Butchers and Other Shops

Thirty two inspections were made at butchers' shops during the year.

Quantities of foodstuffs condemned:

Butchers shops	212 lbs
Other shops	463 lbs

LIQUID EGG (PASTEURISATION) REGULATIONS, 1963.

No pasteurisation plants exist in the district.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

There are two licensed slaughterhouses in the district. 100% meat inspection in accordance with the Meat Inspection Regulations 1963 was carried out.

The results of inspection are tabulated on the following page.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT

Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	3,996
Total No. of informal notices served	8
Total No. of informal notices complied with	8
Total No. of statutory notices served	7
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	7
Total No. of prosecutions	Nil

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis:

Disease	Total Cases Notified
Scarlet fever	2
Whooping Cough	8
Measles	3
Dysentery	1
Acute Pneumonia	1
Infective Jaundice	1

Tuberculosis	Respiratory	Non-Respiratory
New cases notified	nil	1

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned 1968.

	Cattle including Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	451	668	1,253	974
Number inspected	451	668	1,253	974
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci				
Whole carcases condemned	-1	9	3	5
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	55	13	161	325
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	12.42	3.29	13.09	33.88
Tuberculosis Only				
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-
Cysticerosis Only				
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-

Food Poisoning

Two associated, but distinct, outbreaks of food poisoning occurred during the year not disassociated from the filming of "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" in Sherborne. Both appeared to be due to staphylococci food infection.

The one affected (as far as could be estimated) 37 persons, the other, 11 persons.

I cannot refrain (much as I usually try to avoid doing so in a report of this nature) from commenting on the excellent work your Public Health Inspectors carried out in respect of both outbreaks, which resulted in the identification of the cause of the outbreaks within a matter of hours and so enabled precautionary measures being taken to prevent a similar recurrence of trouble.

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health.